

Animal Matters!

Trying to make a difference for our Fairfax County Animals. Today and Tomorrow!



Fairfax County
Animal Shelter

Hello! We'd like to introduce ourselves.....

Did you know that there is a place with open doors and warm hearts for every lost, abandoned, abused, temporarily homeless, or unwanted Fairfax County animal? We are the County Animal Shelter, and working hand-in-hand with our County Animal Control Officers, we provide another, although perhaps less well known, life saving service in our community.

Just imagine if there were nobody you could call about the hungry stray dog that had been hanging around on your street in the freezing cold? Or nowhere to take the newborn kittens that you found in the supermarket parking lot? Nobody to turn to if your beloved pet were lost? Nobody to step in to protect defenseless animals if they were being abused or neglected? Nobody to try their best to find a loving new home and family for the homeless? Nobody to provide shelter and food and care to these animals in the meantime? And nobody to take on the unpopular and heart wrenching responsibility of providing the kindest way out, for suffering, and homeless, but unadoptable creatures.

Mahatma Gandhi once said, "The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way that its animals are treated."

We cannot claim to be great yet, nor to have perfect solutions to the often heartbreaking problems that both people and animals in our society face today. But we can continue to strive to make things better for those that suffer. With your help and support, we stand an even better chance of making a difference!

Please help us help our fellow Fairfax feeling creatures. Learn about the issues that the furred, the feathered, and even the scaled face today, and set an example for others, by being a responsible, caring pet owner and a protector of nature!

Animal Matters! is published quarterly, and is also available online at:
www.co.fairfax.va.us/ps/ac/homepage.htm



Sparkie Downs used to be a shelter dog. She has a dream, that one day, every pet will have a loving home full of jerky treats...
"Er, Sparkie... We don't think cats like jerky treats!"

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Kids section too!

Issue Number One
February 2000

The Question is not, Can they reason? Nor, Can they talk? But rather, Can they Suffer?
..... Jeremy Bentham, 19th Century Philosopher



Ooops! Did you forget about your dog license this year?

THEY WERE DUE BY JANUARY 1ST!

But, it is never too late to get yours. And there are important reasons to do so.

Should your dog ever get lost, it could be his or her ticket home!

You see, just a license tag, or just a rabies tag isn't enough! If it is after hours or a holiday, and the vets are closed, there is no way to identify your pet by only a rabies tag. And in an emergency situation, an animal control officer cannot tell from just a license tag, whether or not your dog's rabies shots are current...

[This is particularly important today in Fairfax County, given the numbers of rabies incidents that we have had!]

License fees go into the general county account that funds the shelter and animal protection and control services our community depends upon.

Please don't take a chance, by assuming that only other people's pets get lost or will ever need help!

**Do it for your dog.
Do it for your community.
And it is the law!**

Animal Alumni!

We'd love to tell the tales, er tails, of our incredible adopted animal alumni! If you have pictures and stories to share, please mail them to "Animal Alumni" at the shelter, or e-mail them to animalalumni@yahoo.com.

Winter Whoas!

We highly recommend the following for your pet's comfort and wellbeing....

A warm place for shelter...

In the winter, the best place for a pet is indoors, but if this is not possible, outdoor pets must be given proper shelter. Their home should be 4 inches off the ground to prevent dampness, and have a door to keep out winter wind, rain, and snow. Their shelters should be insulated or heated. Water can be heated so that there is always unfrozen water available for a thirsty pet. Outdoor pets require extra calories to keep warm. In severely cold or inclement weather, no pet should ever be kept outside.

Check under your hood!

Roaming cats, as well as house pets and wildlife, may climb onto vehicle engines for warmth during cold weather. Be sure to check under the hood before starting your vehicle and honk the horn to startle any animals seeking shelter inside.

Frostbitten paws, and salty streets....

Snow and salt should be removed from your pets' paws immediately. Frostbitten skin is red or gray and may slough off. Apply warm, moist towels to slowly thaw the frostbitten areas until the skin appears flushed. Contact your veterinarian as quickly as possible for further care. Snow removal products should be stored out of the reach of pets and small children as they can be deadly poison.

You can purchase or renew a license by mail/in person at the Department of Tax Administration (12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 223, Fairfax) or in person at the Animal Shelter! A license costs \$5 for an infertile dog, and \$10 for a fertile dog. The form is available to download at www.co.fairfax.va.us/dta/dog_licenses.htm. For further information, please call (703) 222-8234.



Only one in ten US pets will find a good home!

Spread the word! February the 29th is "Spay Day USA!"

And together (even if you aren't a pet owner!) we can FIX the problem. You have probably heard that it is very important to spay /neuter your pets. But do you know why?

There are compelling reasons to make this choice! Your pet will be healthier and happier, AND you'll be saving lives. Even if you don't have a pet, sharing this information with a pet owner would be very helpful!

Many people just aren't aware that there is an overwhelming and tragic pet overpopulation problem in our country today. The Humane Society of the United States estimates that in the US, approximately 12 million animals are taken to shelters EACH year, and between 6 and 8 million of those pets will NOT find a new home and family. There just are not enough good homes for the numbers of animals being born. And because people aren't aware of the problem, they often allow their own pets (accidentally or on purpose) to add to the crisis.

Of course, all baby animals are adorable, and it is hard to accept that these little miracles of life could bring anything but joy into the world. Sadly, the reality is that for every new pet baby born (if they don't end up at a shelter themselves) one more potential home is taken away from the millions of already born, homeless animals waiting and hoping for a second chance....

Your pet (and you) will be better off too! An altered pet is a more content, gentle and affectionate pet. And an altered pet is a healthier pet, less likely to get mammary or testicular cancer, less territorial, with no messy heat for females, and males less likely to wander in search of the ladies! (80% of pets hit by cars are un-neutered males!)

Please help us end the pet overpopulation tragedy. Make an appointment with your vet today! Help others understand why it is important to spay/neuter their pets! Perhaps you could even help a pet owner to get their pet spayed or neutered.....



Thank YOU, Fairfax Citizens!

I'm Animal Friendly license plates have raised over \$12,000 for spay/neuter programs in our County!

You can purchase the plate from your local Virginia DMV for an annual fee of \$25 (in addition to the registration fee.)

This is a revenue sharing plate, and after the sale of the first 1000 plates, \$15.00 is contributed to the locality in which the vehicle is registered

Every Spay/Neuter Counts!

Spay/Neuter Resources

National Referral Service: 1-800-248-SPAY
Low Cost Spay/Neuter: 1-888-SPAY4VA
SPAY, Inc: 703-521-2677 (leave a message)
Prevent a Litter Coalition (PaLC): 703-818-8009
Arlington Animal Welfare League: 703-931-9241
Alexandria Animal Welfare League: 703-838-4775
Dominion Animal Hospital: (703) 437-6900

Spay Day USA is sponsored by the Doris Day
Animal Foundation: www.ddal.org

How Can YOU Help?

The shelter always needs clean towels and blankets. We would love to pamper the pets with treats and toys too! And we wouldn't complain if someone were kind and generous enough to provide us with a scanner and digital camera for all our new outreach endeavors.... And last, but by no means least, we would be thrilled if someone were to offer us their printing services for this newsletter!

As for volunteers, we are excited to announce that we are in the process of developing a brand new volunteer program, and that we will start to accept applications for interview shortly after July 2000.

ID helps reunite families!



Shelter Statistics

Between July '98 and July '99, we took in a lot of lost pets. 1963 dogs and 855 cats came to our shelter as strays. We were able to reunite 1367 of those dogs and 55 of those cats with their families. Moments such as those are full of emotion and joy for us all: the pets, their families and our shelter staff! But we still all dream of the day that we can reunite EVERY lost pet with his or her family. However, as pets cannot speak for themselves, we cannot do it without ID!

Lack of ID is a problem that shelters face every day. Please don't assume that because you have an indoor cat, or a fenced in yard that you don't need ID for your pets! The numbers of lost animals that don't find their way back home speaks for itself.

ALL pets should have ID (tag, tattoo and/or micro-chip) They are required by law to have rabies shots, and dogs (over four months old) must also be licensed.

**Give your pets the gift of love!
Give them ID!**

Animal Calendar

Sunday, March 12, 12-2pm

Low Cost Rabies Clinic@ Fairfax Government Center

Bring your cats and ferrets in carriers and your dogs on leashes!

For further information, contact the shelter, or visit our web site.

Adopt-a-Pet

Did you know that you could see our animals (not just cats and dogs!) up for adoption, on Fairfax County Government Channel 16?

Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays - 2:30 p.m.

Tuesdays - 10:30 p.m.

Thursdays - 8:30 p.m.

Saturdays - 6:30 p.m.

Fairfax County Animal Shelter



4500 West Ox Road

Fairfax, Virginia 22030

Shelter: 703-830-1100

Animal Control: 830-3310

www.co.fairfax.va.us/ps/ac/homepage.htm

Office Hours:

Tuesday-Friday: 8:00AM to 6:00PM

Saturday: 8:00AM to 5:00PM

Adoption Hours:

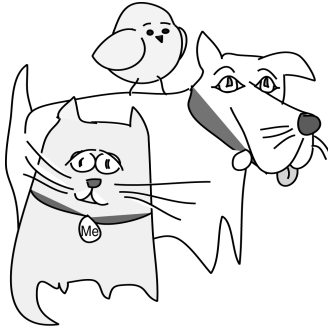
Tuesday-Friday: 10:00AM to 5:00PM

Saturday: 10:00AM to 4:00PM

Friends of the Feathered & the Furred....

Hi there, Kids...

I bet, even if you haven't done it yet, that you've thought about starting or being in a club! Perhaps you were wondering what kind of a club to start? Or maybe you already belong to a club and are thinking of things to do in it?



Did you ever think of starting a club to help animals? There are lots of animals that urgently need help, and kids can do a gazillion things for them! For example, February 29th is "Spay Day USA." That's a day when shelters and friends of the animals try to help people understand that there are just too many pets being born, and not enough homes for them all.

(Did you know that cats and dogs have 4 to 6 babies at a time? We call all those babies a "litter" of kittens, or a "litter" of puppies.)

It is easy to fix the problem!

All people have to do is to take their pets to the vet for a special operation (called spay or neuter) so that the pet can't have babies. It is a simple, quick and good operation for people to do for their pets, because it not only helps all the homeless animals, but their own pet will be happier and healthier too!

But it is also very hard to fix the problem.

Because a lot of people don't know that there are too many pets and not enough homes. So they don't spay or neuter their pets, and just let them have babies (either by accident or on purpose.)

Maybe you or your club could help us tell everyone about the problem? Here are some suggestions of things you can do....

Start a Web Page with information about animals that need to be adopted from your local shelter or that teaches people about the pet overpopulation problem.

Design flyers to distribute, explaining that there are just too many pet babies being born, and that everyone should adopt a homeless animal first, before allowing their pets

to have even more babies! (Did you know that EACH year in America, as many as 12 million pets go to shelters!) How old are you? Times your age by 12 million! Can you imagine that just since you were born, that many animals have been homeless? Do you think that there could ever be enough homes for them all?

Make signs that proudly tell your neighbors and passersby that you live in a litter free home, or that you live on a litter free street, or in a litter free community! MY STREET IS A LITTER FREE ZONE! (You should probably draw pictures of pet babies to explain that you mean the pet kind of litter!)

Talk about the problems that animals have. Explain it to your friends and family, and the other kids at school too. Do a school project or play on shelters and animals.

Learn about what animals need and what shelters and animal organizations are trying to do to help them. See what ideas you can come up with on your own. Maybe you can think of a way to help the animals that the grown ups haven't thought of yet!

Some Places to Find Information....

Look for animal organizations on the web!

Your local library!

Check the phone book or Yellow Pages under "Animals" or "Humane Society"



Remember to always check with a grownup before you start your project.

Here's what Rally needs: food, shelter, water, grooming, exercise, vet check ups and shots, love & attention, someone to clean up after him, training, toys, ID tag, dog license, patience if he is doesn't always do the right thing or have the best dog manners, and to live happily and safely with his family for the rest of his life.....

Hi Kids. My name is Rally Blake.
What's your name?

Can you think of all the things that I
need to be a happy and healthy dog?

Why don't you write them down, or
draw them? How many things can you
think of? (Pssst. Let me give you a
hint. Think of things that YOU need to
be happy and healthy! We are a lot
alike you know.....)



The answers are on the other side...

This page was filled in by: _____

For Kids ONLY